University of Montana
PUAD 503: Policy Analysis
Summer 2020 (Online)

Professor:
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Communication with the Professor:
The professor can be reached via email from 8am-5pm (M-F) for course inquiries. The best form of contact is email but texting can be used for emergencies. Please allow for up to 24 hours for a response. Student email inquiries sent over the weekend, will be addressed on Mondays. Please email your instructor to set up an appointment to meet over Zoom.

Course Description:
This course will introduce you to the theory and practice of policy analysis. Working as a policy analyst requires conducting research to effectively inform decision makers in making decisions in the public’s interest and doing so within a democratic setting. Accordingly, the class is theoretical but mainly practical as you are introduced to some of the key tools in the policy analyst’s toolbox. We will use examples from various contemporary policy examples to illustrate our major theoretical points and the utilization of policy analysis tools. This course is unique, yet complimentary to PUAD 531 Introduction to Public Policy. PUAD 531 focuses on the policy process and this course on the tools used by a policy analyst.

Course Learning Objectives:
1. Apply the theory of policy analysis to practice in real policy environments.

2. Understand the foundational readings behind policy analysis as a field and professional in public administration.

3. Understand and apply the tools of policy analysis including problem definition and analysis, developing and accessing policy alternatives, assembling evidence, using evaluation tools, and communicating evidence to decision makers in a recommendation.

4. Understand the role of cultural awareness in the practice of policy analysis.

5. Demonstrate graduate level writing, public speaking, critical thinking, research, and analytical skills.

In exploring these, the course will introduce and begin to develop core national (NASPAA) MPA competencies to participate in and contribute to the Public Policy Process.
**Course Materials:**

**Course Assignments:**

**Readings and Mini-Lectures (Preparation):**
Your instructor has provided you with course material that will enhance your understanding of the theory and practice of policy analysis. Our collective learning goal is for you to engage in weekly readings and view mini-lectures. You are encouraged to start early to give yourself enough time. You will be required to give an accounting of your study of the course materials on the mid-term and final self-assessments.

**Team Discussions:**
There will be two team discussions using the discussion forum tool in Moodle this semester (Week 4 and Week 10). The class will be divided into two teams (approximately 12 students each) to carry on discussions exploring and deepening the course content. The team discussion for Week 4 will cover the course material from Week 1 through Week 4. Similarly, the team discussion for Week 10 will cover the course material from Week 5 through Week 10.

Details for Discussion Leader: Each student will serve as a co-discussion leader once (either for Week 4 or Week 12). You will select your week using the link provided in Moodle (and emailed to you by your instructor). What this means is that you will be leading a discussion thread with another classmate. Together, you will develop a discussion question(s) to be posed to your discussion team for the week. As the discussion leader, you will “add a new topic” and pose your question by 11:59p.m. (MST) on Tuesday night (only one co-leader has to post the question). It is your responsibility to post on time and failure to post your question(s) by 11:59p.m. on Tuesday will result in a “not meeting expectations” designation and will forfeit your obligation to serve as a discussion leader for the semester. Please plan accordingly. Additionally, as the discussion leader, you will be expected to take a much more active role in facilitating the discussion among your classmates. Your instructor will be there along with you facilitating the discussion. You should also participate as normal on the other discussion threads of your team during the week you serve as discussion leader.

Details for Discussion Respondent: If you are not the assigned discussion leader, you are the respondent. You are required to respond to all of the questions posed by each discussion leader by Wednesday night 11:59p.m. (MST). This means that you must be completed with the reading materials and the weekly lecture before this time. After Wednesday and until Saturday night, students are expected to make multiple substantive posts to their classmates and carry on a discussion with them. While the class discussion board hours are open 24 hours, you are required to post comments as early as possible to provide ample time for the exchange of ideas. Thus, if you wait until 10p.m Saturday to finally post your replies, the assessment of your
performance will reflect this. It should be noted that there is not a set number of discussion posts that must be written in order to successfully complete this assignment. Such stringent measures often stifle discussion. At the end of each week, your instructor will look at your participation on the discussion board holistically. Your initial posts on Wednesday and multiple reply posts that you make subsequently during the week should be thoughtful and substantive. This is not to say that you can’t make posts that are less substantive but only that it should be obvious that you were an active participant throughout the week. Importantly, if someone comments on a post you previously made, you should respond as quickly as possible. One of the biggest issues on discussion boards are students not replying back to comments made to them. This is not how a discussion would work in the “real” world and it should not be how a discussion works in the “digital” world. A lack of participation will automatically result in a “not meeting expectations” designation. Lastly, the discussion boards demonstrate how you engage with the course materials. You should consistently reference the course materials in your comments and connect them with your own ideas and thoughts. However, avoid writing such long posts that your classmates choose to overlook them (limit to 250 words each).

**Zoom Meetings:**
You will be required to attend two meetings over Zoom this semester, one at the beginning (Week 1) and one at the end (Week 12). For both meetings, you will be able to select your preferred time by visiting the link emailed to you by your instructor a week before the meetings take place. The first meeting will be an orientation to the course. In this meeting, we will briefly introduce ourselves and discuss the expectations of the course. For the second meeting, we will meet for final student presentations (please see the directions below). If you are unable to attend one or both of these meetings, please contact your instructor for another option.

**Semester Policy Project:**
This semester, you will conduct policy analyst project. This project will be completed in a series of segments. Each segment builds upon the previous assignment. The project follows Bardach and Patashnik “eightfold path” (also known as the “five step framework”). Here are the steps for this project.

1. **Send an email to your instructor with your proposed policy issue- due Sunday May 24th**
   Your instructor will promptly reply (within 24 hours) either approving of the selected policy issue or asking you to reconsider or narrow your topic. If you are interested in two policy issues, propose both. Your instructor will advise you on which will be more realistic for research within the parameters of the semester. Some sample topics include affordable housing, suicide prevention, medicinal/recreational marijuana legalization, wildfire suppression, and waste reduction. There are plenty of policy issues to choose from. Think about your specific interests or research that aligns with your professional goals.

2. **Segment 1: Research Outline- due Sunday May 31st**
   For this segment, you will write a research outline for the policy issue you selected. Use the lecture and course readings from Week 2 to inform how you approach this process. This
document should be approximately ½ page to one page in length (single spaced) and you are permitted to use bullet points where necessary.

Your research outline should:

1. Outline how you plan to use the research tools discussed in our course materials in the exploration of your policy issue.
2. Discuss documents (e.g. government data/written reports, research databases, etc.)
3. Detail any other resource you plan to use in carrying out your research this semester.

Note: Your performance will be assessed based upon your ability to apply the course material effectively in the execution of this assignment. The direction of your research may change as you continue to study your policy issue throughout the semester. This is normal. The purpose of this research outline is to get you started on the right path. Remember to follow the guidelines for writing assignments noted below.

(3) Segment 2: Problem Analysis & Policy Alternatives- due Sunday June 14th
Using the research you have completed so far, draft a problem analysis and develop policy alternatives that address the overarching problem identified. Use the lecture and course readings from Weeks 3-4 to inform how you approach this process. This document should be approximately 3 pages in length (single spaced).

Your problem analysis should include the following components (approximately 1-2 pages):

1. Frame the problem.
2. Measure the problem
3. Determine extent of the problem
4. Determine causes of the problem
5. End with a problem statement that is clearly identified

Then, draft 2-4 realistic policy alternatives that address the overarching problem identified previously. These policy alternatives should be explained in detail and in a clear manner so there is no question how each alternative would look like in practice.

Note: Your performance will be assessed based upon your ability to apply the course material effectively in the execution of this assignment. The composition of your policy alternatives may change as you continue to study your policy issue throughout the semester. This is normal. Remember to follow the guidelines for writing assignments noted below.

(4) Segment 3: Evaluation of Policy Alternatives & Recommendation- due Sunday July 19th
Building upon the policy alternatives provided in Segment 2 (and the feedback your instructor subsequently provides), you will draft a thorough evaluation and recommendation of these alternatives. Use the lectures and course readings from Weeks 6-9 to inform how you approach this process. The document should be approximately 7-8 pages in length (single spaced, and this includes the 3 pages from Segment 2).
Your evaluation should include the following components:

1. The updated version of Segment 2, the problem analysis and policy alternatives.
2. Select the criteria for evaluation. Take approximately ½ pages to write out and justify your criteria.
3. Select at least one evaluation method to compare your policy alternatives. These evaluation methods should be based on the criteria you selected previously (i.e. if you selected “efficiency” as an important criteria, a cost-benefit analysis or similar analysis method might make sense). The methods you select will be based on individual preference and in accordance with the criteria you selected. Then, using these methods, compare policy alternatives.
4. Provide written discussion that provides context to the analysis, data, and information provided in #3.
5. A reference page at the end.

Your recommendation should include the following (approximately one page):

1. Briefly delineate the option you are recommending. Explain why it is the best option moving forward.
2. Remember to connect back to the central problem statement you articulated previously.

Note: Your performance will be assessed based upon your ability to apply the course material effectively in the execution of this assignment. If you need to go beyond the page limit or include an appendix, please contact your instructor to explain your reasoning for this need. Remember to follow the guidelines for writing assignments noted below.

(5) The Final Product- due Friday July 31st
Make the revisions your instructor requests for Segment 3 and resubmit. This constitutes your “final product”.

Note: This final product can be used as a demonstration of your research abilities for the final MPA portfolio.

(6) Student Presentations- will take place during Week 12
For the final presentation, you will act as if you are a policy analyst for a state or local agency. You will present your research to us (a group of decision makers) detailing your evaluation and recommendation for the policy problem identified in your semester project. Presentations should not exceed five minutes.

Your presentation performance will be assessed using the following criteria:

**Preparedness:** Student is prepared with an artifact (hand-out or slide presentation) that effectively outlines the topic selected. Student also demonstrates preparedness in mastery of subject matter.
**Content:** Content of the presentation is engaging, made relevant to the course, and presented in a clear and concise manner. Student presents factually correct information and is able to demonstrate breadth of knowledge when responding to questions.

**Professionalism:** Student presents as if they are conducting a real presentation in a real-world-setting. Student demonstrates professionalism in appearance, articulation of the content, and in presentation style.

**Time:** Student makes effective use of presentation time. The presentation skillfully moves from one point to the next without appearing rushed. Student is able to keep to 5 minutes.

**Assignment Assessment:**
Your instructor will have all assignments assessed with feedback within one week of day they were due. If you ever have a question or concern about feedback received on an assignment, please do not hesitate to contact your instructor.

**Course Grading Contract:**
This course uses a form of grading called contract grading. There are no points or letter grades in this course, aside from the final letter grade you earn at the end. The premise of contract grading is that if you do the work required to earn a B, you will see enormous gains in your learning. Traditional grading systems encourage you to work for “points,” as if learning were a game whose goal was to get a certain grade. Contract grading provides you with reassurance that if you complete all of the assigned work, you will earn at least a B (which is all you need to be in good standing in our department). This can free you up to focus on your learning, not your grade. To put this system of grading in context, consider how your performance is evaluated in your own workplace. In most workplaces, you generally do not receive feedback in the form of a score on individual tasks, but instead are given qualitative feedback on tasks with a possible numerical value attached in a comprehensive review.

During the semester your instructor will not assign grades or scores to individual assignments; instead they will provide written or verbal feedback on the assignments that you turn in. The feedback will identify the strong aspects of the assignment, point out information or concepts that were missing from your assignment, and/or suggest additional work (thinking, writing, reading, etc.) that you need to do in order to improve your understanding of the topic. Ideally this feedback will help you deepen your understanding of the material and concepts. See below for descriptions of the grading criteria.

**Earning a C (Not meeting expectations)**
You will earn a C in this class if you miss any assignment, submit assignments late, lack adequate participation on the class discussions, submit writing that is not college level work, or fail to adequately follow the assignment directions in some way. These
examples are considered “not meeting expectations”. If you submit an assignment that is
not meeting expectations, your instructor will afford you one opportunity to make
revisions until the assignment meets expectations. You also risk earning a C if you are unable to keep up with the course materials and complete them in their entirety.

To Earn a B (Meeting expectations)
You will earn a B in the class if you complete all of the work in the class (including the reading) on time and with sincere effort. This means staying current with the reading each week, actively participating in each class discussion, submitting all assignments on time, and actively participating in any assigned teams. To earn a B, your writing should reflect college level work including the use of outside sources as support, the proper citation of those sources, and no spelling or grammatical errors. Your instructor will let you know that your work is at this level by telling you that your submission “meets expectations” in the assignment feedback. The average final grade for the class will be a B.

To Earn an A (Exceeding expectations)
You will earn an A in the class if you do all of what is required for a B and show excellence in your work. Features of A work include:
• Strong critical thinking, including the ability to understand and respond to other views
• Writing that shows critical reading and careful rereading
• Ideas that are uniquely your own, not just repeated from class discussions
• Taking risks in your writing (trying a new technique or a more challenging approach)
• Clear sentences, careful proofreading, and well-integrated quotes
In class discussions, your instructor will look for evidence that you’re stretching beyond your usual ways of participating. If participating is hard for you, try to confront that fear with small steps such as asking questions. If participating is easy for you, try to hold back more and listen to others.

In some circumstances, your instructor may award + or – grades if deemed necessary to better reflect the performance of a student during the semester.

Mid Semester Self-Assessment- due Sunday June 21st
During Week 6, you will submit a self-assessment of your performance so far in the semester. This assessment only takes three-five minutes to complete and can be found on Moodle (Week 6). In it, you’ll indicate how you are doing in the class in terms of your effort, completion of the course materials, and overall participation. You are also welcome to share any challenges you’re experiencing in the class and how you plan to overcome them. If you desire additional clarification on course expectations, you can
request a Zoom meeting with your instructor on this document. Your instructor will review this document and respond back in the form of an email the following week.

Important Policies and Expectations

Time Commitment:
The standard for work outside of class is to spend 2-3 hours outside of class per week. That means for a 3-credit course, you should end up spending about 6-9 hours outside of class each week on average. For an online course, time spent “in class” includes any activities involving other classmates (team discussions, etc.) or watching the Mini Lectures. “Outside of class” includes readings and individual written assignments. As a summer course, you can expect each week to be more intense than a usual semester due to the condensed 12-week schedule.

Guidelines for Written Work:
All written assignments should meet the following criteria unless otherwise noted in the assignment instructions or the professor:

1. All work must be typed, single-spaced, utilize 12 point times new roman font, and have one-inch margins.

2. Citations should follow a proper style guidelines such as, but not limited to, MLA, Chicago, or APA (in-text citations and a reference page are necessary).

3. Assignments are due on the date/time listed in the course schedule; late assignments will not be accepted,

4. All assignments must be turned in electronically via Microsoft Word (not as a PDF). If the instructor cannot open the document, the student will not receive a grade. Submission of assignments via e-mail will not be accepted unless specific arrangements have been made.

5. Written work will be evaluated both in terms of content, following instructions, organization, and writing/grammar.

6. Student collusion is not allowed for individual assignments (unless working in an approved team) and will be treated as an act of plagiarism.

Note on Technology:
No “technology problem” excuses will be accepted in this class. That is, you cannot blame your failure to complete an assignment on time on “computer/internet/Moodle issues” (unless it was one that affected the whole class, in which case we will address the issue on a class-wide basis). Make sure to back up your work, perhaps using Microsoft OneDrive on your computers or UMBox/Dropbox.
**Note on Late Work:**
The expectation in this course is that assignments are submitted on time. Extensions are always granted for two circumstances. (1) If an emergency situation arises and you inform the instructor BEFORE the due date, (2) If you have a disability AND have sent the instructor an accommodation letter from Disability Services. If the reason for a late assignment falls outside of these circumstances, please reach out to your instructor for guidance. The best way to prevent the possibility of submitting an assignment late is to plan ahead.

**Discussion Ethics:**
Some of the issues we discuss in this class are controversial with multiple, and sometimes divisive points of view. Although you may already have an established opinion on a particular topic, you are encouraged to consider other points of view and the strengths/weaknesses of your own. Additionally, as we discuss controversial topics, you are expected to respect the points of view of your fellow students. Respect is shown in the manner you address other students and the words you use to carry your point across. In an increasingly uncivil political environment in the U.S., civility will be maintained in this class so as to elevate the educational experience of all present.

**Academic Honesty:**
Students must follow the University’s policies for academic dishonesty. All work submitted must be your own; no duplicate work (work completed for another class) will not be accepted. Acts of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Moreover, acts of plagiarism will also be reported to the Academic Court. To avoid acts of plagiarism, cite each reference or source you use and give proper credit for the ideas, opinions, and findings of others. When you are using the exact words of others, you must use quotation marks and include the page number where you found the quote in your citation. For help on avoiding plagiarism, see the following resources from the UM Writing and Public Speaking Center.

**Sexual Misconduct:**
UM prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in its education programs or activities. Prohibited sex discrimination includes incidents of sexual harassment (including sexual violence), dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking (collectively “sexual misconduct”). It is your instructor’s responsibility to help create a safe learning environment for students and for the campus as a whole. University policy requires that your instructor report all incidents of sexual misconduct that come to their attention. If you encounter sexual misconduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at (406)243-5710. Additional information about sexual misconduct and available resources can be found on the UM Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action website.

**Student Disability Related Needs:**
The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance, and you have not already registered
with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. Your instructor will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

**Cultural Leave Policy:**
UM has a Cultural and Ceremonial Leave Policy: “Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student’s customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student’s attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.”

**UM Writing Center:**
The Writing and Public Speaking Center provides one-on-one tutoring to students at all levels and at any time in the writing process. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize this service to get help and receive feedback from writing experts.

**Land Statement:**
The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispell people.

**MPA Portfolios:**
If you are using any assignments from this course for your final MPA portfolio, it is your responsibility to keep track of individual grades and professor feedback. Use your computer’s “snipping tool” or screenshot to capture graded feedback to save with your files. We ask that you very carefully read the MPA Portfolio requirements listed on our website (e.g. no you cannot use outlines or case write ups). We ask that you be mindful of individual and group projects you participate in each semester so you stay on track – we appreciate you doing so. Each DPAP professor will always offer an option to complete projects on your own. If questions, contact the MPA Director.
Course Calendar:
A “week” in this class starts Monday and ends the following Sunday. Preparation items should be started early in the week. Usually, most items will be due on Sunday at the end of the week. I strongly suggest imputing due dates in your personal calendar to ensure you submit assignments on time.

Week 1: What is Policy Analysis? (May 11-17)
- Preparation:
  1. Attend Course Orientation via Zoom
  2. Read Lindbloom 1959 “The Science of Muddling Through” (On Moodle)
  3. Read Meltsner 1986 “The Seven Deadly Sins of Policy Analysis” (On Moodle)
  4. Read Bardach and Patashnik “Introduction”
  5. Read Meltzer and Schwartz “Introduction” and Ch. 1
  6. Watch Mini-Lecture
- Due:
  1. None

Week 2: Doing Policy Research (May 18-24)
- Preparation:
  1. Meltzer and Schwartz Ch. 7
  2. Bardach and Patashnik Parts II, III, and IV (we will come back to Part I later)
  3. Watch Mini-Lecture
- Due:
  1. Approval of your policy research topic. Email instructor by Sun 11:59pm

Week 3: Defining the Problem (May 26-31)
- Preparation
  1. Read Rochefort and Cobb 1993 “Problem Definition, Agenda Access, & Policy Choice” (On Moodle)
  2. Read Melzer and Schwartz Ch. 2
  3. Read Bardach and Patashnik Part I: Steps 1-2
  4. Read Kraft and Furlong Ch. 5 (On Moodle)
  5. Read Case: School Shootings and Focus Group Research (On Moodle)
  6. Watch Mini-Lecture
- Due:
  1. Segment 1: Research Outline due Sun 11:59pm

Week 4: Devising Policy Alternatives (June 1-7)
- Preparation:
  1. Read Meltzner and Schwartz Ch. 3
2. Read Bardach and Patashnik Part I: Step 3
4. Watch Mini-Lecture

- Due:
  1. Team Discussion: Initial posts due Wed 11:59pm. Reply posts due Sun 11:59pm
  2. Remember to consistently research your policy issue

**Week 5: Writing Week (June 8-14)**
- Preparation:
  1. None- Work on Segment 2
- Due:
  1. Segment 2: Problem Analysis & Policy Alternatives due Sun 11:59pm

**Week 6: Selecting Criteria (June 15-21)**
- Preparation:
  1. Read Meltzner and Schwartz Ch. 4
  2. Read Bardach and Patashnik Part I: Step 4
  3. Read Kraft and Furlong Ch. 6 Pages 178-192 (On Moodle)
  4. Watch Mini-Lecture
- Due:
  1. Midterm Self-Assessment due Sun 11:59pm
  2. Remember to consistently research your policy issue

**Week 7: Evaluating Alternatives Pt. 1: Technical Aspects of Policy Analysis (June 22-28)**
- Preparation:
  1. Read Bardach and Patashnik Part I: Steps 5-6
  2. Read Meltzner and Schwartz Ch. 5
  3. Read Kraft and Furlong Ch. 6 Pages 192-214 (On Moodle)
  4. Read Clemmons and McBeth Ch. 3 (On Moodle)
  5. Watch Mini-Lecture
- Due:
  1. None- Remember to consistently research your policy issue

**Week 8: Evaluating Alternatives Pt. 2: Incorporating Stakeholders (June 29-July 5)**
- Preparation:
  1. Read Bryson 2004 “What to do when stakeholders matter” (On Moodle)
  2. Read King et al. 1998 “Toward Authentic Participation in Public Administration” (On Moodle)
  3. Read Clemmons and McBeth Ch. 1 (On Moodle)
  4. Read Case: Big Mart: Cheap Goods at What Price? (On Moodle)
  5. Watch Mini-Lecture
- Due:
1. None- Remember to consistently research your policy issue

**Week 9: Making Recommendations (July 6-12)**
- **Preparation:**
  1. Read Meltzer and Schwartz Ch. 6
  2. Bardach and Patashnik Part I: Steps 7-8
  3. Read Case: Playing Politics: Bison, Brucellosis, Business, and Bureaucrats (On Moodle)
  4. Watch Mini-Lecture
- **Due:**
  1. None- Remember to consistently research your policy issue

**Week 10: Writing Week (July 13-19)**
- **Preparation:**
  1. None-Work on Segment 3
- **Due:**
  1. Segment 3: Evaluation of Policy Alternatives & Recommendation due Sun 11:59pm

**Week 11: Policy Analysis in Practice (July 20-26)**
- **Preparation:**
  1. Read Meltzer and Schwartz Ch. 8-9
  2. Read McPhail 2003 “A Feminist Policy Analysis Framework” (On Moodle)
  3. Read Case: The Pocatello Women’s Prison Siting Story (On Moodle)
  4. Watch Mini-Lecture
- **Due:**
  1. Team Discussion: Initial posts due Wed 11:59pm. Reply posts due Sun 11:59pm

**Week 12: Final Student Presentations (July 27-31)**
- **Preparation:**
  1. Attend Final Presentation Meeting via Zoom.
- **Due:**
  1. Final Product due **Fri 11:59pm**
  2. Final Self-Assessment due **Friday 11:59pm**